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EDITORS' TABLE.

EDITORS: A. S. PACKARD, JR., AND E. D. COPE.

— We are just at present having, on both sides of the water, a series of jeremiads preached by the high priests or prophets of science. It is perhaps well, at times, to go out into the streets, to sit down in sackcloth and ashes, to bewail our situation, and to improve the opportunity by asking alms of the passers-by. Professor Lankester appears before the British Association, tells the British public some plain if bitter truths concerning the endowment of scientific research, and then coolly asks alms of the British government for England alone (Scotland and Ireland left out) to the amount of the annual interest on two million pounds.

We wish the English government could be brought for a period of one generation to make annual grants to that amount. It would literally be a costly experiment, but that enormously rich government has made, and is making in other directions, vastly costlier ones.

It is the fashion to depreciate the state of science in France, but that republic votes annually large sums of money for public education, higher as well as lower, which might well put to the blush Great Britain and the United States. Meanwhile laboratories for scientific research have been built at Roscoff, Concarneau, Villefranche, Banyuls and elsewhere, founded by private means, where England has at present nothing to compare with those institutions. Who in England is doing such work in fine anatomy and histology as Lacaze-Duthiers, Balbiani, Kunkel-d'Herculais and Viallanes? What publications are there in England to offset the *Annales des Sciences Naturelles* and Lacaze-Duthiers' magnificent journal? The only English journal of the sort is the excellent *Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science*, which, however, is partly filled with the work of German-bred and American students. We do not wish to be thought to detract from English science, for in biology she can point to rare men like Darwin and Balfour, Bentham and Hooker, Owen and Huxley.

The German government is at present engaged in the manufacture of soldiers and scientists; her men of family rank and inherited genius are largely to be found among the latter; but politically the German people are in leading strings, and the

strings have been tightened within two or three years. Let imperialism feed its soldiers and scientists, banish too inquisitive and turbulent savants, like Vogt and Fritz Müller, socially snub its professors, and meanwhile build its splendid laboratories and museums. It is perhaps laying the foundations for the future political and social advancement of the masses.

In this country the people may never, to any great extent, sanction special educational grants beyond what the Government is now doing for its scientific commissions. We must look to private generosity. Our people are developing national character; every man, scientist or factory-hand, is, besides attending to his specialty, doing his part in "running" the Government. We cannot afford to develop and train a privileged class of soldiers and scientists; strong in their specialty, weak in morals and statesmanship and all that make masterful minds. Still, jeremiads as applied to the United States are only too true. There is little danger that science in this country will be too much pampered. As has been insisted in this journal, and as Professor Rowland, in his many respects admirable address, emphasized, we tend towards mediocrity. That is one great danger of democracies.

And after all, as much as money is needed to aid in scientific research, there is a greater demand for men and brains. There are now living in this country numbers of young men of leisure and means who might devote themselves to science, or at least aid those who are working for science, by assisting in organizing and managing, as well as raising funds for the numerous scientific organizations now arising in our cities. College corporations should elect into their bodies more young men who sympathize in the higher education, which, it may be said, is not all confined to so-called colleges; post-graduate courses, scholarships and fellowships might be attached to the smaller colleges through the liberality of liberal-minded men of wealth; there are always to be found one or two graduates in any college who could be trained in original research; our laboratories and museums might be more effectually manned if our leading citizens were more fully aware of their necessities. Science is becoming widely popularized in the present generation, and the fruits will be seen in the next. But in a country like ours, the government alone need not undertake the task of creating a body of scientists; that work should be done by the people and for the people. The time is coming when our people will be less materialistic, and when those who are well-off already will cease trying to accumulate more wealth, but turn their attention to "rolling up" the intellectual and scientific capital of our domain.